

[The suggestion made by Dr. Goodfellow in the foregoing letter seems to be a most excellent one. There is certainly a great deal of work being done in this city which should be of more value than it is. Not a week goes by but that some doctor from out of the city comes into the JOURNAL office and asks for information more or less along this line. Doubtless, too, there are a number of men holding either medical or surgical clinics, or operating at the various hospitals, who would be more than willing to demonstrate their work to their fellow practitioners from outside the city. So far as the office of the State Society is concerned, the secretary is quite willing to be the distributor of information and to receive and post all notices of the sort suggested by Dr. Goodfellow. The suggestion is so good and so timely that something ought to come of it.—Ed.]

A Question.

To the Editor of the STATE JOURNAL: A few words of commendation, a criticism, and a question; then I am done. I regard the CALIFORNIA STATE JOURNAL OF MEDICINE, on account of the principles for which it is striving, as the ideal medical publication. It is the desire of the State Society that its JOURNAL represent the Principles of Ethics in their purity, and you are certainly to be commended for carrying out the wishes of the Society in such a fearless and faithful manner. My criticism is in regard to the type used in printing many, if not all, of the original articles; it is entirely too fine and causes considerable ocular effort in perusing such articles. Am in hope that the finances of the Society will soon permit a change in this respect so that all original communications may be presented in type of similar size to that in which the editorials are printed. The question: What should be our position in reference to referring patients for treatment or diagnosis or having work done by laymen who claim proficiency in the use of the X-Ray and other electro-medical apparatus? Yours sincerely,

JOHN T. RANKIN,

Brady Bldg., Los Angeles.

[Will the members of the Society, who have considered the point raised by Dr. Rankin in regard to non-medical X-Ray operators, be good enough to forward their views to the JOURNAL office?—Ed.]

The Druggist Question.

To the Editor of the STATE JOURNAL: I have received two numbers of the CALIFORNIA STATE JOURNAL OF MEDICINE and read them carefully. I am delighted with the ethical tone of the JOURNAL. It is nearly alone in the stand it has taken on the advertising question, and is the nearest right of any medical journal I know of. I hope it may long maintain its position and not be enticed into questionable commercial methods as so many have been.

There is one important matter that I wish to call your attention to, viz: the attitude of the N. A. R. D. towards the medical profession. That wonderfully virile association is bending all its power to the task of stopping the cutting of prices, principally of the innumerable "patent medicines" of this country. It is trying to help the retail druggist. In doing so it has promulgated the doctrine that no wholesale druggist shall sell medicines to physicians, and that physicians shall not put up their own prescriptions if they want to. Is it not about time for the medical profession to organize and have drug stores established, where nothing is sold but the medicines and remedies actually prescribed by physicians? While I appreciate highly what the pharmacists have done for medicine, yet it seems to me that the druggists

everywhere in this country are so much under the influence of the nostrum vendors and the proprietary medicine firms that physicians are about to get the "horse laugh" as a set of "good things" who do not know anything about their own business. When one of our patients takes a prescription into a drug store to get it filled he or she has to run the gauntlet of a hundred or two nostrums, in all the glory of glaring labels telling the patient or his or her friend that there is no need to fee a doctor for a prescription, as there is a better, cheaper and surer medicine in the patent packages or bottles than any physician can prescribe from the materia medica. And our good friends, the druggists, who frequently bribe us by donating thermometers, handbags or pocket cases, and a variety of things for our personal use, scatter the handbills and samples of the nostrum makers broadcast over the front yards of town and country, and have flaming posters on every available space inviting the dear people to come and buy the patents and be cured. Is this insult to be forever continued and the medical profession take no means to prevent it? I think the suggestion I have made is worthy of consideration and should be brought before the whole profession of the United States. Drug stores for putting up prescriptions and selling surgical supplies, would do more for the elevation of the medical profession than any one thing I can imagine.

THOS. W. MUSGROVE, M. D.

AN OBJECT ACCOMPLISHED.

When, in June, 1897, the publisher of this journal assumed the responsibility to publish the transactions of the Medical Society of the State of Pennsylvania in journal form, he had in view the accomplishment of two special objects, namely, to prove that it could be done without the aid of the quack medicine advertisers, and also to show that the transactions of a state society published in journal form were of much greater value to such an organization than when issued in book form. As this latter was an experiment among state medical societies, it was looked upon with considerable misgivings by many members, but the results accomplished by the Medical Society of the State of Pennsylvania under this arrangement, and its adoption by some ten or twelve other state societies, also apparently with good results, proves the wisdom of the plan of publishing the transactions in monthly installments. We claim for the Medical Society of the State of Pennsylvania the position of pioneer in establishing the merits of this plan.

With regard to the advertisements, we feel that the most ethical member need blush at nothing that has appeared in this journal, and it should not be forgotten that it was not for lack of opportunity that unethical advertisements were not abundantly represented.

The publication of a medical journal, and especially one representing the transactions of a great medical society, should be as free from commercialism as is the daily life of a physician actuated by the highest motives of humanity, and no one will deny that to encourage the use of unethical remedies tends to injure the sick and afflicted rather than to benefit them, and the only advantage, therefore, that can accrue is represented by the monetary consideration.

Working for results believed to be of great benefit to both the profession and the public, the publisher has found much pleasure in his labor, but other responsibilities devolving upon him render it imperative that this work shall be carried on by other hands, and with this issue, therefore, the active participation in the publication of the transactions by the present publisher will come to an end.—Dr. Koenig, in the *Pennsylvania Medical Journal*.